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A Magazine of Verse

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FATHERLAND

FOR what would a man die?
For what would a man be dead,
In April?—go down and lie
In a low bed,
And when spring was passing by
Pull the covers over his head?

Did he know his house would be dark,
The window curtains drawn,
When the morning star was a spark
On the ashes of the dawn?—
Chilly and very low,
With no door swinging back and forth
Where he may pass and go

[1]

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

Over the shining swarth,
With the winds singing to and fro
And the redbirds winging north?
Would he lie like a straight ash stick
When the roots around him stir
And the other dead are quick—
The daisy and ragweed and burr?—
Lie still, though he hear in his night
The wind blowing on to June;
The silence of ripe sunlight
Over the grass at noon;
The stars like bees overhead
In the apple trees and the plums?
For what would a man be dead
Now April comes?

Do men love Fatherland
So, that they die for these:
Night in blue valleys, and
The breakers of blue seas;
Clouds marching, caravanned,
And star-acquainted trees;
Cities time's made grey
And talkative and wise;
Hills so old they may
Watch pain with patient eyes;
Young mountain-tops that play
At touching the skies;

Elaïse Robinson

The heavens, like a bent hand;
The brown earth underneath?
Are these his Fatherland,
For which man stops his breath,
Takes off his body, and
Goes down to sit with Death?

Or is it this that rouses
His heart to go:
Do streets of little houses
Keep haunting him so
With their secrets, like small caged birds
That flutter and fly at the sill,
And their ghosts of long-dead words
That are walking still;
With their cool white beds for sleep,
And their tables spread,
And their tented roofs that keep
Out the curious moon overhead?

For these what man would end
His own fire and lamp-light,
His thought that is his friend
And sits by his hearth at night;
His old, acquainted clothes
And the sweet taste of bread—
All of the things he knows—
Go down in the earth and be dead?

POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

No, this is Fatherland,
For which men, lifting up
Life, toss it on the sand
Like water from a cup:
A little land that has
Truth round it like a sea,
Where dreams are many as
The leaves are on a tree,
And stars grow in the grass
For men to touch and see.
A little, holy land
Within all hearts of men
The earth holds in her hand—
There he is citizen
With high, heroic things,
With faiths and loyalties,
With deeds that put on wings,
And songs that sing of these;
With sacrifice, though it be
For a mistaken dream;
Justice and mercy
Alive with a little gleam
In the earth of men who say
They have rooted it from the sod
And taken another way
And got them another God.

From mountains of the moon
April has come once more;

Eloise Robinson

But April, nor May, nor June,
Will ever find his door.
He lies so quiet now
In puzzlement how death
Can be so kind, and how
Lightly he draws his breath.
Almost afraid to stir
Lest he find his dreaming vain,
He drinks of wonder there
As green leaves drink the rain.
I think he was not sad
To feel his weight of clay,
Nor sorry that he had
Lost April's way.
He had such glory in
His closing eyes
He needs no stars to spin
And bubble in clear skies,
No young south wind that leaps
Singing, no April flowers;
Within his house he keeps
A greater spring than ours.

Eloise Robinson